



**Library Board Meeting
Minutes
6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 9, 2016
City Hall – Conference Room C**

**Members present: Clay, Helmuth, Irish, Olson, Soeteber, Tucker, West Blank
Public present: J. Gillman, K. Natoli, D. Reed
City Officials: Mayor Sonnentag, City Administrator Davis, Council President West**

1. **Call to Order:** 6:00 pm
2. **Public Comments:** none
3. **City Officials: to discuss library long range facility plans. We look forward to visiting with the Mayor, Council President and City Administrator. The intended start time is between 6 – 7 pm.**

Westby: Thanked city members for attending.

Sonnentag: Hasn't read report yet.

Davis: It's important to understand the recent history with which the City Council approaches this issue. The City built a new fire station, police station, EMS facility, and Public Works building during and immediately after the 2008 recession, which created "an albatross of debt" for the city when property taxes declined. There has been "desperation" to cover operating expenses over the last 5-6 years, including the development of a TIF district to float operating budget. This feasibility study came at a great time for the library but a terrible time for the city. The common ground: we've both had some desperate times. There is friction in the council over the decision to engage in the feasibility study. Davis agrees that the study was warranted, and asks how do we continue? Recommends reaching out to council members in groups of two to come to library board meetings. Entire council is supportive of the library but "the rub" has to do with timing related to financial decisions. A new library facility is a complex project that would factor in many considerations, such as parking in the downtown area. Davis: "I personally think the feasibility study is a great start."

Seltzer: Would this project go ahead sooner if we raised a percentage of this cost? 50%?

Davis: The City has a goal to levelize debt service through the early 2020s...if the library raised half the funds that could push it up.

Gillman: Donors who contribute to a library project will want this development to happen soon.

Helmuth: Can the library help to develop the city's comprehensive plan?

Davis: Yes, the comprehensive plan will include the library. Library has 1,000 visits a day / Mustard Museum has 1,000 visits a week – library is important to the downtown.

Gillman: We'd need a go-ahead from the city before we could start fundraising.

Westby: Discussion of 'option 3' space between City Hall and Senior Center as a possible new site. There has also been interest in purchasing our current space, which could help offset costs.

Reed: This option "puts a face" on the street by linking the Senior Center, Library, and City Hall.

Davis: The parking aspect has been one of the most complicating factors for the downtown. If the parking is serving the general public, it is possible it could be funded via TIF funds.

Sonnentag: Adding additional parking spots would be seen as favorable to the city council.

Tucker: Do we need to spend time in our presentation explaining the need for larger spaces for the library? Sonnentag and Davis agreed yes. Discussion of needs for new types of spaces.

Gillman: The growing population will tax our space needs even more.

Davis: The community center aspect of the discussion is very important. Initially there were council members in support of this, later when discussions turned to funding, some members had conflicting opinions. Davis recommends asking more questions about community center intentions. Present vision for multi-use programming facilities. Currently we rely on our schools for much of the city's recreation use.

Helmuth: We need to present our vision for how we'll have collaborative conversations with other departments.

Davis: A building funding consideration: take estimate on parking and consider that TIF funds that, then divide by 2 – half borrowing from City, half raised through library fundraising. Consider library impact fee as an additional revenue. If we start exploring it in this way, that may be a way to build a bridge. Aim for April or May for presentation. West Blank will bring pie. Suggestion to have this at a Saturday morning meeting: April 16, 23, 30? Give executive summary before meeting and at meeting, use charts and images to illustrate arguments.

Susan West arrived at 7 to join the discussion.

West: The City funding an \$18 million project would require a 9% tax increase, or 4.5% increase at 50%. We have raised property taxes quite a bit in the last 2 years, but that's to catch up for not raising them in years before. West projects 2027 as the first year funding could happen.

Reed: We need to present a funding package that considers multiple sources.

West: We need new facilities for the Senior Center and growing Youth Center space needs. Ask Council what they envision for this process – ask the City Building Committee to create a plan. There are current concerns about hitting the levy limit. We haven't added new staff in a long time but we've been growing. We may need a referendum to fund operating expenses (a consequence of Act 10).

Soeteber: What percentage reduction in taxes will we incur with TIF? Would this help level tax increases? I felt an obligation to vote 'yes' for the feasibility study due to the need I was seeing from my observations as a library board member.

Helmuth: Where can we find a spot to open the dialogue?

West: We need to present information on the financial picture of the city so you can understand where we're coming from.

Davis: if composition of the state legislature changes, things could change for the better from our perspective (city levy limit currently exists, but may not if there's a change in state governance).

West and Olson: the whole council needs to consider the future building plans for the city – hasn't been discussed at all recently. West would like presentation on finances. West: non-TIFF tax revenue growth is coming mainly from Bishop's Bay.

4. **Approval of Minutes of the January 2016 meeting (action item):** Moved by Clay, seconded by Helmuth. Motion passed unanimously.
5. **Approval of Vendor Report January 2016 (action item):** Moved by Soeteber, seconded by Helmuth. Motion passed unanimously.
6. **Old Business:**
2016 Budget Revision (action item): See copy in packet from Westby – includes memo from John Lehman to draw attention to the fact that the City Council did not approve the additional transfer for the employee COLA raises. Olson: This is still to-be determined. (Next council meeting is 2/16/16.) Westby advised the board that the library budget needs to have a balanced budget (revenues should equal expenses). Generally speaking, we have only one area where we could do that, which is materials. Westby recommends a 20% decrease in books and 20% audio (total reduction is about \$46,912). A decrease in our materials budget would negatively affect county funding and cross-county reimbursement funding, as well as circulation and visitor count. Tucker: We must make clear the effects of this if this stays in the budget. Soeteber moved to make this adjustment to the 2016 operating budget. West Blank seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The Board directed Westby to send a memo to the Finance Committee.

Building Committee Report & Emergency Roof Truss Repair (possible action item): Structural Engineer Mike Leiferman noticed the roof gap when he was in the building to consult on the staff walkway project. We are very fortunate that he made this discovery and prevented a disaster. Westby reports that the City is pursuing legal action that may or may not result in compensation. Recent developments reveal that the design of the building was sound, but construction was faulty; in some areas, welding was never done during the initial construction. The building was built using the lowest bid contractors. At times in the building process, an inspector may have been absent, according to the former director.

Staff Walkway Project Update: Westby and Leiferman presented the updated costs of the staff walkway project at the Finance Committee Meeting. The Finance Committee has not taken any further action on this project. The RFID access for this door will be installed in the coming weeks. The only item left in the project is to build a ramp, which exceeds the project budget.

7. **New Business:**
Annual Report to Department of Public Instruction (action item): Westby distributed copies of the final version of the report, noting several recent updates. West Blank moved to approve the annual report with the changes Westby noted. Seconded by Clay. Motion passed unanimously.

Endowment Development Grant Application (action item): Westby's letter of inquiry was accepted and advances to the application process. Dennis Dorn, a community member and former board member, will assist Westby in writing this grant. This Madison Community Foundation endowment development grant is for \$50k to be matched with \$150k in endowment fundraising, doubling the

value of the Library's endowment to \$400,000. Helmuth moved to pursue the Endowment Development Grant. Seconded by Seltzer. Motion passed unanimously.

Proposed Update to the Internet Policy (action item) - tabled

Library Board Report January 2016 - tabled

Request to create a permanent Friends Liaison (first hearing) - tabled

8. **Next meeting:** March 8, 2016 - 6:30 p.m.

9. **Adjourn (action item):** 8:07 pm

Minutes recorded by R. Light based on her notes and are subject to change.